

Our Bible School

STUDIES IN THE LIFE OF CHRIST

Monday : (1) The Doctrine of Providence. Luke 13 : 1-5. (2) The Barren Fig Tree. Luke 13 : 6-9. (3) The Bowed Woman. Luke 13 : 10-17.

Tuesday : (1) The Charge of Blasphemy. John 10 : 22-42. (2) The Solemn Warnings. Luke 13 : 22-35.

Wednesday : (1) The Feast in the Pharisees's House. Luke 14 : 1-14. (2) The Great Supper. Luke 14 : 15-24.

Thursday : (1) The Terms of Discipleship. Luke 14 : 25-35. (2) The Recovered Sheep. Luke 15 : 1-7. (3) The Recovered Coin. Luke 15 : 8-10. (4) The Recovered Son. Luke 15 : 11-32.

Friday : (1) The Shrewed Steward. Luke 16 : 1-18. (2) The Rich Man and the Beggar. Luke 16 : 19-31.

Saturday : The Resurrection of Lazarus. John 11 : 1-44.

Sunday : (1) The Prophecy of Caiaphas. John 11 : 45-54. (2) The Invisible Kingdom. Luke 17 : 20-37.

BIBLE STUDY

Rev. A. C. Dixon.

It is important that we gain an intelligent idea of the Bible as a whole. Read it, therefore, rapidly, from the beginning of Genesis to the end of Revelation. It is well thus to look upon the ocean of truth, study its islands, continents and currents, before we try to sound its depths ; to walk thro the garden and behold the beauty of flower, shrub and tree, before we take to the microscope ; to gaze upon the stars and constellations, before we put the eye to the telescope ; to study the grand outlines of this masterpiece of heaven before we give much time to color, form and feature. Such a view of the book as a whole is necessary to the understanding of its parts.

Tho we may continue this rapid reading until we have read the Bible thro scores of times, it alone will not suffice. We must carefully study books, chapters, verses and words. "Luther," says Mr. Stewart, "used to teach his children to read the Bible in the following way : First, to read thro one book carefully, then to study chapter by chapter, and then verse by verse, and lastly word by word ; for, he said, it is like a person shaking a fruit tree. First shaking the tree and gathering up the fruit which falls to the ground, and then shaking each branch, and afterward each twig of the branch, and last of all looking under each leaf to see that no fruit remains."

There is immense profit for topical study. Take for instance the word patience, and with concordance in hand, find every passage that contains it. Write them down in full. It will require patience to do this, but patience always pays. That done, read carefully the passages before you, and you will instinctively compare one with the other. New views of old truths will refresh you.

Now turn to your reference Bible and look out every parallel passage. Persist in this until you have mastered every text which has in it the idea of patience. A few minutes devoted to it each day will insure great progress. It is well worth all the weariness it may cost. To be conscious that you know what the Bible teaches on even one subject is an unspeakable satisfaction, and happy indeed is he who has thus mastered all the great subjects of Christian doctrine and practice.

Reading as mere pastime will accomplish little. The student who would be fed and enriched by the Bible truth, must be willing to pay the cost of honest toil. The gold veins are scattered and lie beneath the surface. It has been ordained here, as elsewhere, that "in the sweat of his face shall man eat bread," and "if any man work not, neither shall he eat."

Do not become a parasite. When a crab decides to quit work, and live by begging from every passer-by, he soon loses his organs, and becomes little better than the shell fish whose house he occupies. Let us be content to live in no scripture-house built entirely by another man. Study the Bible independently of all help, save the guidance of Him who wrote it, and has promised to guide us into its truth. The Spirit, remember, guides others besides ourselves, but that does not excuse us for becoming blind followers. Diligent students, who live close to Christ, may give us the key to many a passage of Scripture, which we have only to take and enter. Not to Peter alone, however, but to every child of God may be given such keys of the kingdom. Reflected light is better than darkness, but the sun's direct rays give more warmth and life. Moonlight, tho beautiful, is not sufficient for the full development of plant and animal. In a word, make commentaries and lesson helps secondary. Try them by the Bible, and not the Bible by them. Pin your faith to no man, living or dead. "What can I do for you?" asked Alexander of Diogenes. "Only get out of my light," replied the gruff old hermit. And let us, in all humility, but with great firmness, allow no man, however great, to shut himself from the light by his own prejudices. The faith of too many is but the shadows of men, when it ought to be the light from heaven.

SHORT SERMONS

Text : Take heed unto thyself, and unto the doctrine ; continue in them : for in doing this thou shalt both save thyself, and them that hear thee. 1 Tim. 4 : 16.

The Apostle Paul, counselling his friend and follower, gives this very practical advice. These words are no less significant to the preacher of the nineteenth century. Should the minister of the Gospel adopt this Scripture as his only rule and creed his every effort must needs be successful.

It is important to note the emphasis the Apostle places upon the purity of the life of the one who presents the truth. He does

not instruct him to first take heed unto the truth he is to present and the manner of presentation. The injunction is, Take heed unto thyself, unto the doctrine. Unless back of his education and eloquence there is an irreproachable character, he will be weak and unable to do a pastor's work. True, there are men who have delivered the most impressive sermons and even converted souls whose own lives were verily a pollution and a lie. But such lives are rare indeed. There is an influence in a life pure and undefiled which can hardly be overrated. There is a sweetness, an uplifting power in such a life which words are too feeble to explain. It is a benediction on those around it. That was a beautiful compliment paid to her pastor by the old lady who said, "My pastor doesn't preach very flowery sermons, but his life during the week is the best kind of a sermon." Less flowery sermons on Sunday and more noble living during the week on the part of pastors would make better churches. How can that preacher present the truth in its purity who has defiled his body with tobacco or who is guilty perhaps of a still greater sin? Let the preacher first secure a heart pure before God. Then with a storehouse of knowledge he will be prepared for the duties which are his.

What will be the result? He will *save* souls. A more glorious mission has never been given to men. To save men from their sins is the one supreme purpose of Christ and the Church. E. B. G.

The Mission Field

WASHINGTON CITY ECHOES

Since last writing the work has been retarded to some extent on account of sickness in my family ; congregations have been small of late, and yet, comparatively speaking, we have reason to be encouraged.

When the weather is excessively warm or inclement, we frequently have a larger attendance than many of the churches here that outnumber us in membership ten to one. As we move along we always find something to encourage us even while the clouds of discouragement hang threateningly over our heads. For the past month or two we have again had the privilege of testing the worth of our "credit ;" perhaps most of you know that the money in the treasury of our National Mission Board, "got all" some time since ; during such tests it would be nice, wouldn't it, if missionaries could get along without having to spend money to settle house and hall rents, fuel, gas bills, clothing etc., but it does not seem like even the preachers and their families can live on "wind pudding" any better than other people, and notwithstanding we often have "nice things" said about us, such as, "The Lord bless you ;" and "Give him souls for his hier" etc., yet these same good people always expect us promptly the day our rent is due.

But it is better farther on. The raven's of Elijah's time are not all dead yet. God is still able and willing to supply the needs of